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Colleagues Remembered...

Column Editor: **Jack G. Montgomery**, Technical Services Librarian,
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Column editor's Note: This is a new column conceived of as a way to recognize those colleagues who have been influential to our personal and professional lives. Many of us in the profession chose to enter it based wholly or in part on the mentoring or simple interaction of a colleague in our past. Often, these and other colleagues have little or no feedback as to the effect their presence has on the people and patrons with whom they spend their professional lives. If you would like to recognize someone that has affected you in this way, please contact me at (573) 882-7739 or at montgomery@law.missouri.edu. I'll start the ball rolling with the story of one librarian that influenced me in my early life. — JM

"Ms. Revelise"

In the late 1960's I attended high school (name withheld for reasons that will soon become apparent) in the rural south. The school and community had undergone a series of population changes resulting from the influx of people into the area of the state. These varied social and economic groups, combined with the volatile atmosphere engendered by the Vietnam conflict and the civil rights movement, produced a climate of social stress in our high school. One manifestation of this social stress was the development of intolerant attitudes toward those who varied from the established norm that often took its expression in the form of physical violence and intimidation. At times, for those who varied from the norm in terms of dress, hair-length, or expressed dissident attitudes and opinions, high school life could be very unpleasant. One particular example of variant behavior was the refusal to stand at attention during the playing of the popular 19th century tune "Dixie" during pep-rallies for which attendance was mandatory. A student, refusing to stand during the playing of Dixie, was almost guaranteed to be verbally and/or physically assaulted once the rally had ended.

Being disinclined to participate in the above-mentioned expression of regional pa-

triotism, on one particular afternoon a friend and I found ourselves sprinting back toward the main school building with several angry schoolmates in hot pursuit. Having run out of options for refuge, we ducked into the school library. As we stood there panting for breath, we heard a voice say: "You boys are having a bit of a rough time, aren't you?" We turned around to face the librarian, **Ms. Miriam Revelise**, who neither of us had actually encountered until that moment. As we nodded in affirmation, she said: "Tell you what, if you boys will agree to help me here in the library, I can promise you that no one will bother you here." My friend and I looked at each other and seeing the group still waiting outside for us, agreed to her offer.

We began by shelving books and eventually I moved to working behind the circulation desk. Within a short while, word spread that there was a sanctuary available and the library soon had a staff of twenty-five. Although she was stern and demanding at times, we all knew Ms Revelise was our patron and there was a place for the so-called "misfits." For Ms Revelise, this meant occasionally standing up to other teachers and administrators on our behalf. We knew that here was a person who may not have agreed with all our ideas, but who still cared about and accepted us as individuals. As a result, we formed the first official library club at that school and I became the first manager of the first school-supply store established in the library. Above all, there was an adult who recognized that while all people are not the same in dress and manner, they were still worthy of respect and kindness. I cannot speak for the rest of the folks who worked in that small rural high school library during those troubled times, but I graduated with a love for library work and a perception that librarians were people of intellect and, above all, integrity. Many years have passed since those days and I lost touch with Ms Revelise soon after graduation, but often I still reflect on the quiet wisdom, kindness and sense of personal dignity that she gave to so many. 🐾

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creation if it feels vulnerable to the whims of every petty dictator or religious fanatic. But we will certainly be affected, and the Internet, with all its remarkable promise, will be diminished in actuality and potential.

All governments are worried about free and unconstrained communication among its citizenry. Besides protecting life, liberty and

the pursuit of happiness, government also has a great motivation to protect itself. The Internet belongs to the people. In the electronic age, the Net is our free press, our right to gather and petition, our freedom of association. It is the *fin de siècle* town meeting.

Those of us who are in the business or profession of making information available to as many people as possible have a special trust. Let's do what we can to keep the Internet free of fear. 🐾

Profiles Encouraged:

Karen Schmidt



Born when and where: I was born on December 10, 1951, 100 years to the day after Melville Dewey. This scares me, somehow. I was born in Niagara Falls, NY, and grew up in southeastern Ohio in a small "hill-billy" community.

Current residence: I live in the prairies of central Illinois.

Education: I received my BA and MLS from Indiana University and my PhD from University of Illinois.

Family: One husband, one son, and (at last count) 4 stray cats.

Proudest accomplishment: Jacob, my son.

Most recent goal: I took a run for the Illinois state house - a lone Democrat running in a heavily Republican district. My 100 days of campaigning were exhausting, exhilarating, and a lot more fun than I imagined. Maybe Schmidt in '98 will be a future goal, too.

Favorite pastime/hobbies: Politics and religion, the two things my mama told me never to discuss in polite society.

Literary tastes: I will read anything: cereal boxes, calendars, ingredients. But I prefer mysteries, women's diaries, and books of photography from a century ago.

Pet peeve: Republicans. No, not really, just sometimes. What drives me wild are people who are arrogant and quarrelsome as a life style. We all need to help one another get along and these folks just get in the way.

Single most irritating piece of advice: My mother is always saying, "It's a great life if you don't weaken." Actually, sometimes it's a pretty stinky life even if you don't weaken, it's not necessarily a great life if you're strong, and occasionally indulging in some weakness is good for your soul. In over 40 years, I have never understood this maxim.

Biggest surprise: How incredibly long it takes to grow up! It's always over the horizon. When I was little, I thought 18-year-olds were wise as Solomon. When I was 18, I figured everything would be clear by 30. In my 40s, I think maybe it will clear up at 60.

People would be surprised to know: I lift weights. Racquetball killed my knees, and weight-lifting is the best outlet I have for stress these days. I love to be in the weight room at 5:30 a.m. with Melissa Etheridge on the headphones and almost no one else around.

Behind my back, people say: She's too quiet. After some rough-and-tumble meeting, I am always amazed when people tell me how composed I was when the facts are that Hurricane Aaron just swept through my innards.